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Weymouth Fire Caused by Faulty Heating System

State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan and Weymouth Fire Chief Robert J. Leary announced that their joint investigation into the January 6, 2008 fire at 17-19 Worster Terrace has concluded the most probable cause was a malfunction of the heating system. Investigators determined that the point of origin was the oil-fired furnace in the basement. The chimney between the two halves of the duplex was cracked prior to the fire. This crack allowed the fire to escape onto several levels of the home simultaneously where it traveled inside the balloon frame construction walls.

Chief Leary said, "The fact that the fire spread quickly both horizontally and vertically was highly unusual, but was due to the balloon framing combined with an open floor plan. The fact that the building was in the process of being foreclosed upon added to our concern that the fire might have been intentionally set."

State Fire Marshal Coan said. "Heating is one the leading causes of residential structure fires and the leading source of carbon monoxide in homes." He added, "It is important to have heating systems checked by licensed professionals once a year to prevent the twin tragedies of fire and carbon monoxide poisoning."

State police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal and investigators from the Weymouth Fire Department investigated the fire.

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